40 Four Rod Road

1840

Merritt Cowles (1783-1872) & Rosetta Peck (1790-1843

Son Samuel B. Cowles (1819-1851) & Sabra Atwood (1819-1905)

Greek revival

1985 Townwide Historic and Architectural Survey of Berlin, Connecticut. Survey # 043

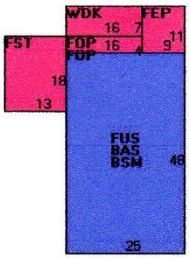
1840 Sabra Cowles/Merritt Cowles current owners: Donald & Edith Parsons

Greek revival

2018 Town of Berlin GIS Index.

1860 Current owners: Parsons Child trust

Sketch



Genealogy

Merritt Cowles (1783-1872) son of Samuel & Mary Lawrence Cowles. In 1813, he married Rosetta Peck (1790-1843), the daughter of Isaac and Theodosia Gridley Peck. They had children: Betsy, Samuel, Sherman, George, Olson, and Rosetta. He was a member of Kensington Congregational Church. He also owned 680 Kensington Road. They are buried in Dunham Cemetery.

Son Samuel B. Cowles (1819-1851) son of Merritt Cowles & Rosetta Peck. He married Sabra Atwood (1819-1905) daughter of Hosea Atwood & Lorena Cowles. They had a son Frank. She is buried in Ledge Cemetery.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDING AND STRUCTURES
HIST-6 NEW 5/77

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
(203) 566-3005

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Town No.:	Site No.:
UTM	
QUAD:	
DISTRICT ☐ S ☐ NR	IF NR, SPECIFY ☐ Actual ☐ Potential

#043

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME (Common) | (Historic) Mrs. Sabra Cowles/Merritt Cowles Hous

2. TOWN/CITY: Berlin | VILLAGE: Kensington | COUNTY: Hartford

3. STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location): 40 Four Rod Road 9-3/88/4

4. OWNER(S): Parsons, Donald E. & Edith B. 111 Kensington Ave. New Britain, CT 06051 ☐ Public ☒ Private

5. USE (Present): Residence | (Historic): Residence

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD ☒ Yes ☐ No | INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE ☐ Yes ☒ No | IF YES, EXPLAIN

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Greek Revival | DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1840

8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)
☒ Clapboard ☐ Asbestos Siding ☐ Brick ☐ Other (Specify) _____
☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Asphalt Siding ☐ Fieldstone
☐ Board & Batten ☐ Stucco ☐ Cobblestone
☐ Aluminum Siding ☐ Concrete Type: _____ ☒ Cut stone Type: brownstone foundation

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM
☒ Wood frame ☐ Post and beam ☐ balloon
☐ Load bearing masonry ☐ Structural iron or steel
☐ Other (Specify) _____

10. ROOF (Type)
☒ Gable ☐ Flat ☐ Mansard ☐ Monitor ☐ sawtooth
☐ Gambrel ☐ Shed ☐ Hip ☐ Round ☐ Other (Specify) _____
(Material)
☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Roll Asphalt ☐ Tin ☐ Slate ☒ Gable end to the street
☒ Asphalt shingle ☐ Built up ☐ Tile ☐ Other (Specify) _____ ☐ Ridge parallel to the street

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ | APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 26' x 48'

12. CONDITION (Structural): ☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated (Exterior): ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☒ Fair ☐ Deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY (Location): ☒ On original site ☐ Moved | WHEN? | (Alterations): ☒ Yes ☐ No | IF YES, EXPLAIN: Fenestration altered, entry new

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES
☐ Barn ☐ Shed ☐ Garage ☐ Other landscape features or buildings (Specify)
☐ Carriage house ☐ Shop ☐ Garden

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT
☐ Open land ☐ Wood-land ☒ Residential ☐ Scattered buildings visible from site
☐ Commercial ☐ Indus-trial ☐ Rural ☒ High building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS
In a cluster of 19th-century houses near corner of Four Rod and Burnham Roads.

#43

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

17 OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (Interior and/or exterior)

The Cowles house has a three-bay facade with a left entry under a small, flat-roofed Victorian shelter on jigsawn consoles with pendants. Windows have plain board surrounds and are fitted with 6-over-6 sash. First floor front windows have wide board lintels. Large plain corner pilasters are topped by a wide plain entablature with a central molding. The molded cornice shows a full return, and the tympanum is flush-boarded. The left elevation has a small shed attached; to the rear is a shed-roofed rear extension.

SIGNIFICANCE

18 ARCHITECT

BUILDER

19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

The house is architecturally significant as a well-preserved example of the Greek Revival style, which reached its zenith in the 1830's and 40's. Typical Greek Revival features include the gable-to-street orientation, the corner pilasters, wide entablature, and flush-boarded tympanum, all designed to suggest the massing and smooth masonry construction of the classical Greek temple. The wide board lintels on the first-floor windows also suggest heavy masonry construction. It was built by the Cowles family, probably in the 1840's. Occupants included Merritt Cowles, his son Frank S. Cowles and, for a number of years, Mrs. Sabra Cowles, Merritt Cowles' widow.

SOURCES

1869 Atlas
Berlin Land Records 31:120 (1853)

PHOTO

PHOTOGRAPHER: HRC
DATE: 11/84
VIEW: NW
NEGATIVE ON FILE: A4A

COMPILED BY

NAME: Historic Resource Consultants
DATE: 12/84
OR: The Colt Armory
ADDRESS: 55 Van Dyke Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

21 THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

[X] None known [ ] Highways [ ] Vandalism [ ] Developers [ ] Other
[ ] Renewal [ ] Private [ ] Deterioration [ ] Zoning [ ] Explanation